

From: [Eldon Wedlock](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Comment wrt IOM's Recommendations for coverage of preventive care.
Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2011 9:42:30 PM

I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in asking you to accept the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine as they pertain to coverage of preventive care under the new health care law - and to reject any exemptions for so-called "religious employers." These preventive services are a critical element of the new law and would provide countless women better access to necessary health care – they should not be subject to the veto of a woman's employer.

The AAUW – and I – believe that any so called "religious refusal" exemptions would unjustly deny women access to contraceptive services. But others, driven by an irrational, ideological distaste for contraceptive services, are pushing the government to make exemptions even larger. Indeed, some groups are pushing for the exemption to apply to religiously-affiliated health care providers, so hospitals with religious connections would be exempt from the coverage requirement, even though they employ people of all faiths and ideologies. This larger exemption, if granted, would deny access to thousands of women just because of where they work, and would blow a hole in the Institute's recommendation.

I urge you to ensure women have access to quality preventive care by accepting IOM's recommendations and rejecting the proposed "religious refusal exemption" provisions. May I add that the exemptions, in my opinion, run counter to (at least) the spirit of the First Amendment to the US Constitution, by creating an exemption solely for a religious "purpose."